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AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA PRIORITY  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/25/2019  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#)  
SUBJECT: CUBA CHAMPIONS HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY -- AS  
LONG AS IT'S IN HONDURAS

Classified By: Political Counselor Joaquin Monserrate for Reason 1.4(D)

¶1. (C) Official Cuban voices have come alive with the events taking place in Honduras. After weeks where the news could not find much more to report than a baseball tournament in Europe and a music concert in Havana, the Government of Cuba has finally found a cause worth championing: the return of Ernesto Zelaya to Honduras and the reaction of the de facto government. Radio stations have put away their records to dedicate airtime to long-winded discussions on the "injustices" of the "fascist" putschists in charge, and TV stations are broadcasting almost non-stop images of beaten-up demonstrators in Tegucigalpa's streets. The official media has even taken to criticizing their counterparts in Honduras for their biased coverage of the news.

¶2. (C) On September 23, the National Assembly convened and issued a resolution decrying the "flagrant violation of human rights" taking place in Honduras. On September 24, Comandante Fidel Castro himself jumped into the discussions with an editorial warning that a regional war was possible if the "pro-yankee and fascist government that represses unarmed men and women" has its way. In one of his regular editorials, he blamed the United States for engineering Zelaya's ouster and our ambassadors in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, whom he cited by name, as the masterminds of the move. Castro also defended Brazil, stating that the country had "nothing to do with the situation" in Honduras.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: The irony of the Government of Cuba's (GOC) boisterous defense of the winner of a democratic contest, and of the human rights of Hondurans, and their freedom to demonstrate freely and without government interference is not likely to be lost on people here. Although Cubans these days are more likely to be discussing their own penuries, or even baseball and music concerts than Honduras, the GOC's stridency in pushing for human rights and democracy elsewhere will highlight their absence even more here.

FARRAR

: NOT PASSED TO ABOVE ADDRESSEE(S)

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